



## PC'S SECRET OF SUCCESS

Actor Priyanka Chopra explains the reason why too many Indian actors haven't broken into Hollywood the way she has

LEISURE P2



## SEVERE HEATWAVE

A severe heatwave with record-breaking temperatures has swept across many parts of Asia affecting normal life

INTERNATIONAL P10



## LOT TO PLAY FOR

With DC having lost all their 5 games, the match today against KKR would be a do-or-die one for them

SPORTS P12



**MANGLED MESS:** Engines and wagons of two freight trains took a tumble after a collision Wednesday which took place in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh leaving one loco pilot dead and five others injured

# India world's most populous nation: UN

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 19: India has surpassed China to become the world's most populous nation with 142.86 crore people, as per the latest UN data released Wednesday. China now has a population of 142.57 crore and hence it has slipped to second spot.

According to a UNFPA's 'State of the World Population Report' (SWOP) 2023, about 25 per cent of India's population is in the age group of 0-14 years, 18 per cent in 10 to 19 years group, 26 per cent in the age bracket of 10 to 24 years, 68 per cent in 15 to 64 years age group and seven per cent above 65 years.

The population demographics of India vary from state to state. Kerala and Punjab have an ageing population while Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have a young population, the report said. This is the first time India has topped the UN list of most populous countries since it started collecting population data in 1950.

The report also states that by 2050, India's population is expected to rise to 166.8 crore while China's head count would dip to 131.7 crore. The report also stated that the



- Life expectancy at birth for males in India is 71 while for females it is 74 years
- Nearly 1/4th of India's population is under the age of 14, according to UN data
- Currently India has 254 million people in the 15 to 24 years age group

China slips to 2nd spot as birth rate in the country declines despite efforts to boost it in several regions

global population is growing at its slowest rate since 1950, having fallen under one per cent in 2020. According to 'the World Population Prospects-2022', India's population last year was 142.2 crore while China's stood at 142.6 crore. The report said the global population was projected to reach eight billion on November 15. Andrea Wojnar, the representative for United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) India and the country director for Bhutan, said, "India's 1.4 billion people must be seen as 1.4 billion opportunities. As the country with the largest youth cohort - its 254 million youths (15-24 years) - can be a source of innovation, new thinking and lasting solutions. The trajectory can leapfrog forward if women and girls, in particular, are equipped with equal educational and skill building opportunities. Wojnar asserted that ensuring gender equality, empowerment and advancing greater bodily autonomy for women and girls are the key determinants for a sustainable future. "Women and girls should be at the centre of sexual and reproductive policies and programmes. When rights, choices and equal value of all people are truly respected and held, only then can we unlock a future of infinite possibilities," the UN official said.

## UGC SEEKS USE OF LOCAL LANGUAGES

New Delhi: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked universities to allow students to write exams in local languages even if the course is offered in English medium, while arranging evaluators and encouraging the translation of textbooks, according to chairman M Jagadesh Kumar. The Commission has also asked universities to promote local languages in teaching and learning processes. "Promotion and regular use of Indian languages in education is a crucial area of focus in the new National Education Policy (NEP)," Kumar said.

## Survey of Mahanadi begins

BLAME GAME STARTS WITH CHHATTISGARH CM BLAMING ODISHA FOR DISPUTE

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 19: The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal began the field survey from Farsiya village, the origin point of the river in Chhattisgarh. A three-member panel comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar, Ravi Ranjan and Indermeet Kaur Kochhar along with assessors and the registrar began the survey. They were accompanied by teams of Odisha and

Chhattisgarh governments.

The tribunal conducted surveys at Farsiya village and nearby areas in Sihawa. The second day's visit will conclude at Sondur, where the team will inspect a dam on Sondur river. On day three, Murumsili dam, Ravi Shankar Sagar reservoir and the new Rudri barrage would be covered.

The tribunal would cover four sites on day four namely Temari Minor Tank at Dhamdha, Udaypur Tank at Khairagarh, proposed

Siddh Baba Minor Tank at Chhuikhadan and Pipariya dam at Chhuikhadan. On the last day of phase one, the tribunal will visit Rajiv Samoda Nisda diversion and Samoda barrage, sources said.

The tribunal will conduct the survey in Chhattisgarh in two phases to study the flow of water downstream and the availability and use of water during the non-monsoon season. The first phase will conclude April 22.

Contd...P4

## COUSINS DROWN IN BALASORE POND

Balasore: Two cousins drowned Wednesday while bathing in Budhabalanga river near Patuka Sasan village under Remuna block in Balasore district. The deceased were identified as Tusharkanta Panda, 17, son of Gyanaranjan Panda in the village and the latter's nephew Bikash Panda, 8, a native of Guhyapala village on the fringes of Jharkhand. A pall of gloom and mourning spread in the area after reports of their deaths spread.

## Woman raped in Bhub

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 19: A 32-year-old woman has allegedly been raped at her residence in Gajapati Nagar locality under Mancheswar police limits here, police said Wednesday.

The accused, Mrutunjay Patra, 36, of Kendrapara, regularly bought groceries from the victim's store, inspector in-charge (IIC) Sudhir Kumar Sahoo said, quoting the complaint on the basis of which a case (No 167/23) was registered.

Patra had borrowed ₹50,000 from the woman for a month. Later, he continued to buy time on flimsy excuses whenever the victim asked the accused to return the money. In the last week of March, the victim called up Patra and insisted that the latter return the money as soon as possible. Patra assured her

that he would repay the entire loan amount by the end of the month.

"On March 29, Patra reached the victim's place to repay the amount. Finding the woman alone, Patra forced himself on her," informed the IIC, citing the victim's complaint. He added that Patra carried out the act taking advantage of the fact that the husband of the woman was away.

Police said the accused even video-graphed the incident and threatened the woman of dire consequences if she dared to reveal the matter to her husband. The victim, however, mustered courage and approached the police who registered a case and launched a probe April 18.

"The victim has been medically examined at Capital Hospital. Efforts are on to nab Patra who is absconding since the incident," Sahu said.

## Temperatures over 40°C in 30 places of Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: Extreme heatwave conditions continued to grip the state Wednesday with mercury breaching the 40 degrees Celsius mark at 30 places in Odisha. However, there is some hope for relief with the IMD stating that some parts of Odisha may receive rain-

fall April 22 onwards for a few days. As per the IMD bulletin, Baripada continued to sizzle and was the hottest place in Odisha registering a maximum temperature of 44.5 degrees Celsius. A total of 11 places registered temperatures of 43 degrees and above.

Contd...P4

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



While replying angrily say any of these. These will answer all the questions, Mr Minister sir!

## Siraj reports 'corrupt approach'

The incident is once again a reminder of the threat from bookies who still continue to haunt Indian cricket and bring to memory the 2013 scandal when IPL was rocked by 'fixing'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 19: India and RCB fast bowler Mohammed Siraj has reported a 'corrupt approach' to BCCI's anti-corruption unit (ACU) from an unknown person, who wanted 'inside news' about both the national team and the IPL franchise before Australia arrived in the country for a full-fledged tour in February this year, sources in the cricket board said Wednesday. The India pacer, who is playing for RCB in the ongoing IPL, had promptly informed the ACU on the development. The incident just goes to prove that bookies still are quite active in India. BCCI sources however, were not ready to term the person as a 'bookie'. "It wasn't a bookie who approached Siraj. He is a driver from Hyderabad who is addicted to betting on India matches. He had approached Siraj via WhatsApp after losing a lot of money on India games," a senior BCCI source, privy to the developments stated on condition of anonymity. "The man also asked for information

regarding RCB and the IPL when he had called Siraj. The bowler reported the approach immediately. The law enforcement (Andhra Police) authorities have nabbed the person," the source added.

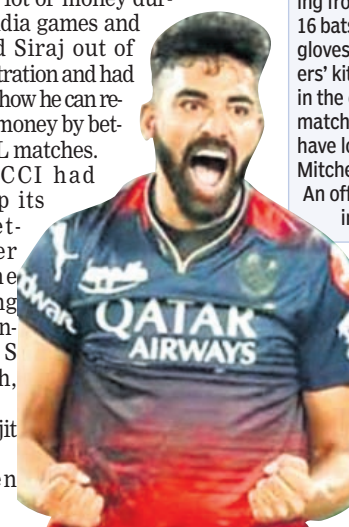
It is understood that the gambler had lost a lot of money during the India games and messaged Siraj out of sheer frustration and had also asked how he can recover the money by betting in IPL matches.

The BCCI had beefed up its ACU network ever since the spot-fixing scandal, involving S Sreesanth, Ankeet Chavan, Ajit Chandila and then Chennai

## THIEVES STRIKE DC

New Delhi: In a shocking incident ahead of Delhi Capitals (DC) next IPL fixture against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), bats worth lakhs of rupees and other equipment of players have gone missing from their kit bags. As per sources, 16 bats, pads, shoes, thigh-pads and gloves have been stolen from the players' kit bags once they arrived Sunday in the capital from Bangalore after their match against RCB. Among those who have lost equipment are David Warner, Mitchell Marsh, Phil Salt and Yash Dhull. An official complaint has been lodged in this regard by DC officials.

Super Kings (CSK) team principal Gurusath Meiyappan, was unearthened in 2013. Now, each IPL team has a dedicated ACU official who stays in the same hotel and is there at the ground monitoring all the movements. Also use of mobile phones by players are scrutinised regularly.



DSPL-14

### Take Precautions Stay Safe from Covid-19

- 1 If you have flu like symptoms (cold, cough, fever, sore throat) isolate yourself & go for COVID test.
- 2 While moving out, wear mask and avoid crowd.
- 3 Clean your hand thoroughly and frequently with soap / hand wash.
- 4 Cover your mouth & nose with handkerchief, towel or tissue paper while sneezing or coughing.
- 5 Children, pregnant women, elderly people and persons with co-morbid conditions need to be more careful.

**Healthy Odisha Happy Odisha**

For more information please call 104 Health Helpline.

**Health & Family Welfare Department, Odisha**

[facebook.com/HFWOdisha](https://www.health.odisha.gov.in)  
<http://www.health.odisha.gov.in>  
[@HFWOdisha](https://www.facebook.com/HFWOdisha)

OIPR-10003/13/0011/2324

# leisure



## KYLIE SLAMMED FOR LYING ABOUT PLASTIC SURGERY

Kylie Jenner has revealed in an interview that it is a common 'misconception' of the public that she has had a 'lot of plastic surgery'. The comment sparked a bunch of reactions on Twitter, where many called out the reality TV personality for her hypocrisy.

## AARON CARTER DROWNED AFTER CONSUMING XANAX

Pop star Aaron Carter drowned in his bathtub after consuming Xanax, his autopsy has confirmed. Carter died at his home in Lancaster, California, in November, aged 34, and his primary cause of death has now been listed as drowning by the Los Angeles Medical Examiner.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
If you are aiming to marry soon, you can start making preparations today. However, before you take the final decision, it would be better to look at both sides of the coin, advises Ganesh.

**TAURUS**  
This is one of those dreadful days when you could be unduly touchy and short tempered, fears Ganesh. Don't go around getting into fights and quarrels with anyone who seems unfriendly or ill mannered.

**GEMINI**  
It will not be hard for you to complete your tasks successfully and without any delays or obstacles in your path, only if you first seek to fully understand and acquire the learning required to perform it.

**CANCER**  
Dame Luck will patronise you today. You will gain from land, house or building trade. You will get total support and co-operation from bosses and colleagues in the office.

**LEO**  
You will be very emotional and sentimental today. Your ego prevents you from expressing your true feelings at times.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh foretells that you will start off on a long, arduous path to success. Some tough work will play a vital role in your progress.

**LIBRA**  
Lady Luck smiles on you today. With all the good fortune on your side, it's assured to be a day when financial gains come your way.

**SCORPIO**  
There are strong indications that today you will be receptive and sensitive towards the needs of other people.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The rewards of hard labour will be sweet, so start off by unwinding with some fun today.

**CAPRICORN**  
Despite repeated failures, very few realise that the key to success is in having the patience of a saint.

**AQUARIUS**  
Be sure of your strengths and decisions, and Ganesh guarantees you success.

**PISCES**  
Ganesh warns that your expenses could be twice as much as your income or profits.

## 'I DON'T CARRY MY EGO OR MY PRIDE'

**Mumbai:** Global star Priyanka Chopra, who is a quite big name in the west now, decided to explore Hollywood at the peak of her career in the Hindi film industry around 2011-2012. Recently, when she visited India for the promotion of her upcoming spy-thriller, *Citadel*, she reflected on a few questions she is often asked.

She said, "People ask me all the time, why haven't other people broken into Hollywood the way you have? I don't have the answer to that. All I know is that the one thing that I did, which maybe led to it, was that I didn't carry my baggage. I come from India, and I'm a big star here, and I have an entourage of 20 people. I don't do that there. I will give an audition. I have no

qualms about walking into the room and showing people my work. I'm not afraid of the work. I don't carry my ego or my pride."

She further added, "I've been a leading lady for a very long time, whether that's in Hollywood or in Bollywood. It takes time to get there. It took me about eight years working in Hollywood to be able to do leading parts."

## Irrfan's last movie to release April 28

**Mumbai:** *The Song of Scorpions*, which marks the late Irrfan Khan's final performance, will be released in theatres April 28. This film is a tribute to the actor who passed away April 29, 2020.

The film, set in Jaisalmer's Thar desert, features Iranian-French actress Golshifteh Farahani opposite Irrfan, with Waheeda Rehman, Shashank Arora and Tillotama Shome in strong supporting roles. The trailer for the film was unveiled Wednesday on digital platforms. The film is written and directed by Anup Singh who made

the critically acclaimed *Qissa: The Tale of a Lonely Ghost* with Irrfan earlier.

Irrfan essays the role of a camel trader in this twisted love story of revenge and the redemptive power of the song while Farahani plays Nooran, a fiercely independent tribal woman, who is learning the ancient healing art of scorpion singing from her grandmother, Zubeida, played by Waheeda Rehman.

Talking about the film, director Anup Singh said, "The film is about choice: you can either choose to breathe out the poison you breathe in, or sing a song of love that heals rather than harms. Irrfan believed in it passionately and I am glad that people will be able to see it soon."



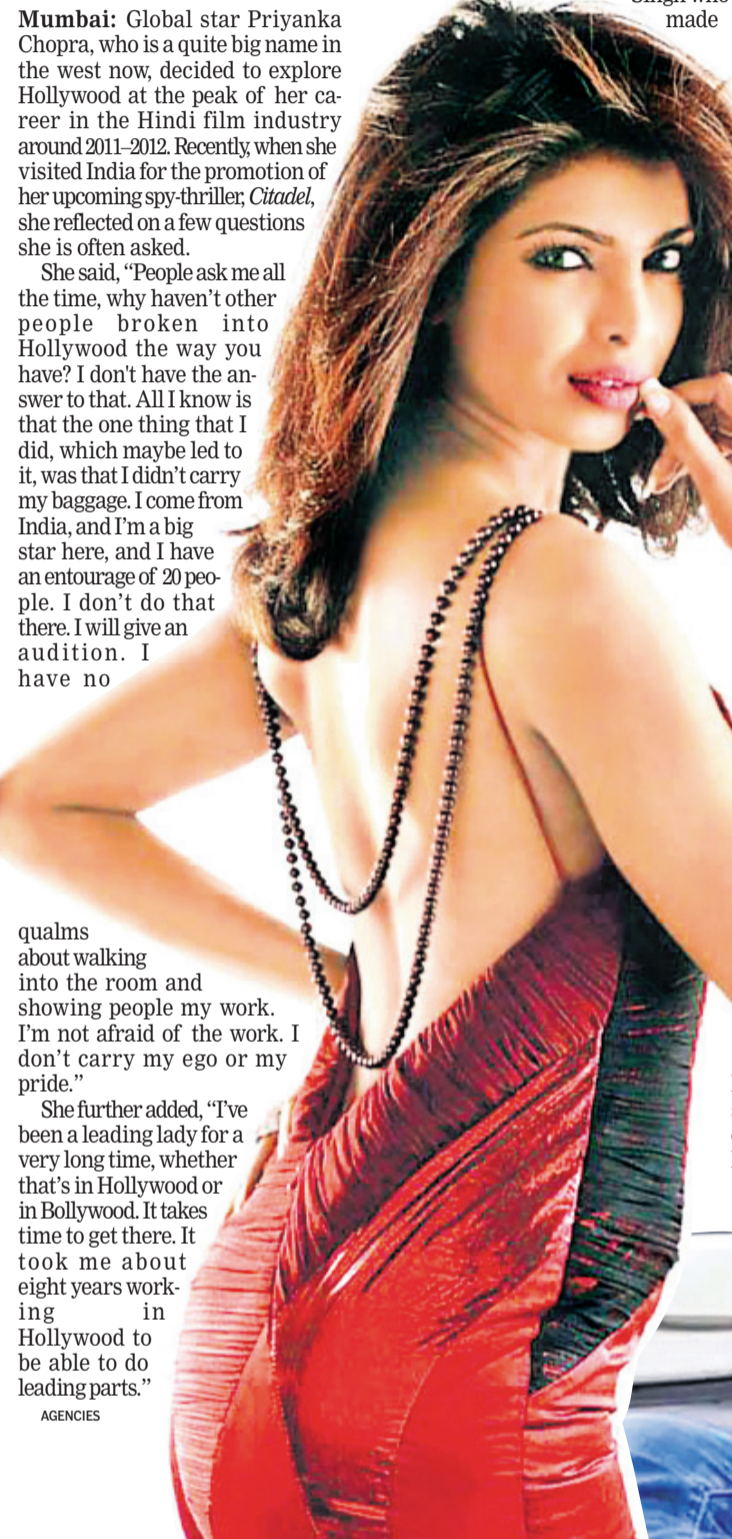
## Navya speaks against street harassment

**New Delhi:** In recognition of International Anti-Harassment Week, philanthropist Navya Naveli Nanda has joined hands with L'Oréal Paris for its 'Stand Up Against Street Harassment' initiative. The granddaughter of Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has urged people to act by taking training about it on [www.standup-india.com](http://www.standup-india.com) to learn how to safely intervene in instances of harassment.

Sharing her thoughts on the prominent social issue, she said, "This International Anti-Harassment Week, let's pledge to create awareness and educate ourselves to manage street harassment effectively. Unwelcome and unwanted comments and behaviours in public spaces are street harassment."

She further detailed the Stand Up programme and said, "Stand Up aims to not only heighten awareness about street harassment but simultaneously encourage bystanders to intervene, support victims and discourage harassers safely. I feel honoured to be a part of this empowering cause initiative with L'Oréal Paris, which will help me strengthen my pursuit of creating a more inclusive space for women."

Navya has been a strong advocate of women's empowerment and has stood her ground for crucial social causes.



## Mani Ratnam rejects the term 'Bollywood'

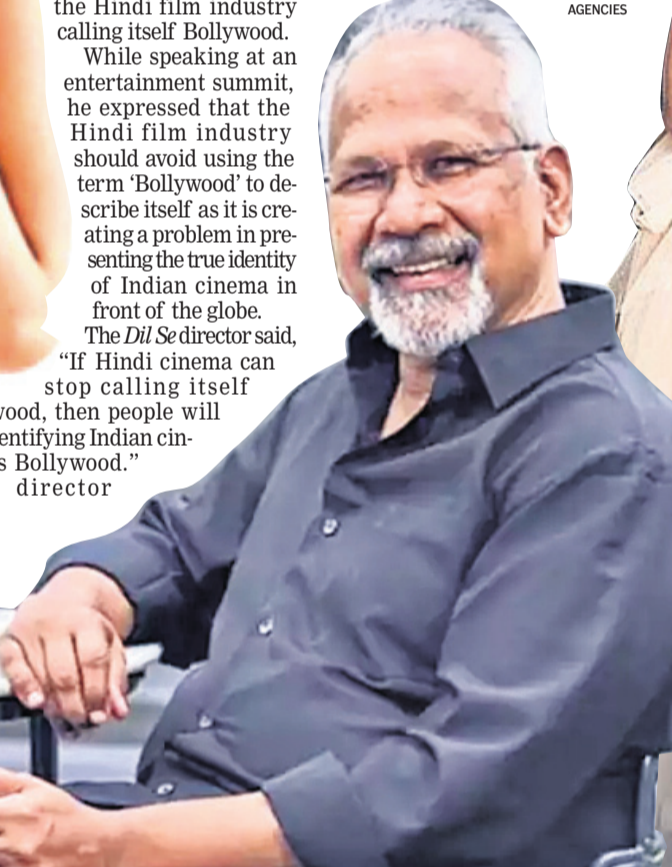
**Mumbai:** In the post-pandemic era, we can feel the undeclared competition between Bollywood (Hindi film industry from Mumbai) and other Hindi dubbed films from the South industries. While the true movie lovers enjoy content from all industries, some try to make it a tussle of egos.

Recently, *Ponniyin Selvan 2*'s director Mani Ratnam raised an objection over the Hindi film industry calling itself Bollywood. While speaking at an entertainment summit, he expressed that the Hindi film industry should avoid using the term 'Bollywood' to describe itself as it is creating a problem in presenting the true identity of Indian cinema in front of the globe.

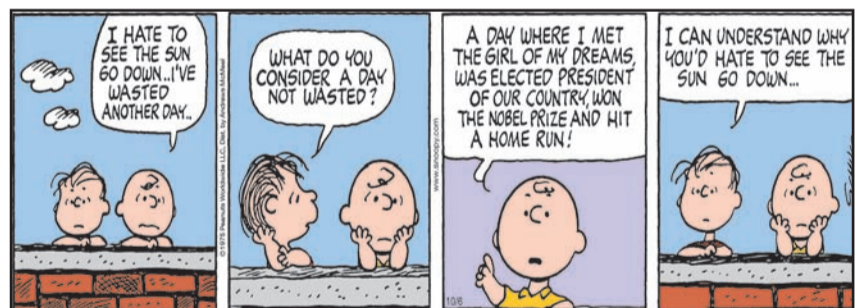
The *Dil Se* director said, "If Hindi cinema can stop calling itself Bollywood, then people will stop identifying Indian cinema as Bollywood." Even director

Vetrimaaragan agreed with it and said, "I'm not a fan of the 'woods' like Bollywood and Kollywood. We need to see it as Indian cinema on the whole."

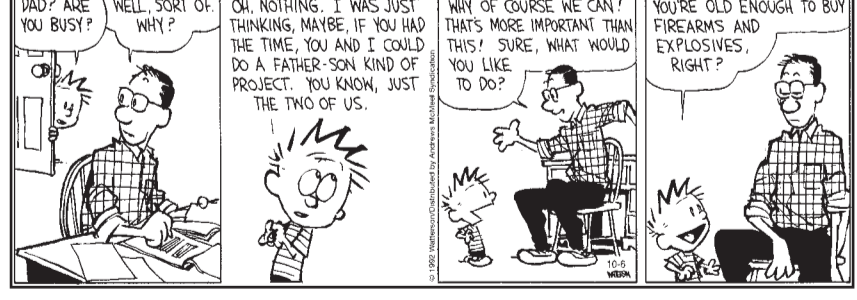
On multiple occasions, films from the South Indian industry were termed 'Bollywood' films. One such instance happened when SS Rajamouli had to make it clear to an American journalist that *RRR* is not a 'Bollywood' film but a Telugu film.



### PEANUTS



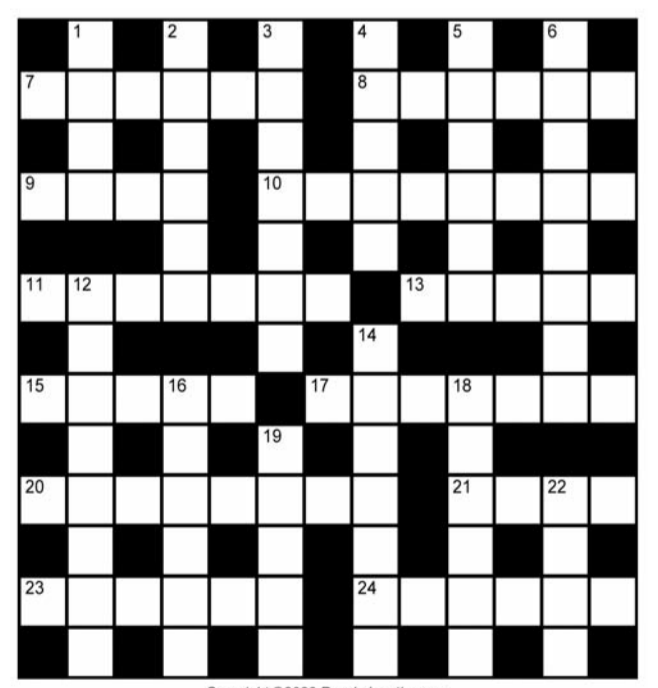
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



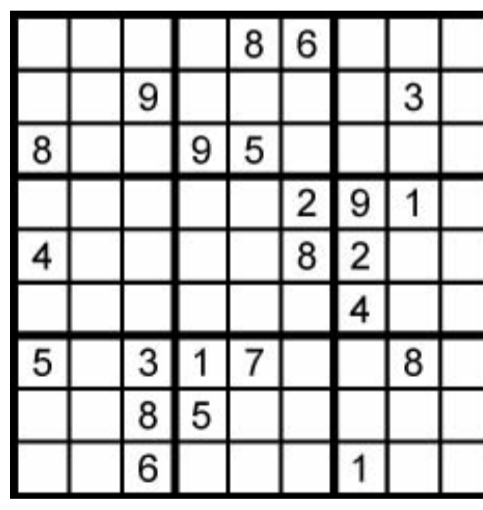
### FUN post CROSSWORD



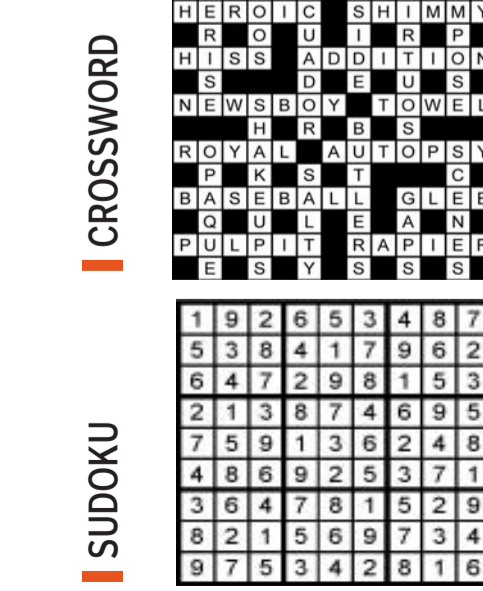
- Copyright ©2023 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 7 Show up
  - 8 Film genre
  - 9 Card game start
  - 10 Laboratory item (4,4)
  - 11 Tombstone inscription
  - 13 Eco-friendly, nowadays
  - 15 Indonesian island
  - 17 Hearing range
  - 20 Processed, like food
  - 21 Hot cereal
  - 23 Run of luck, either good or bad
  - 24 Emergency situation
  - Down**
  - 1 Genuine
  - 2 Shoat
  - 3 Bureaucratic stuff (3,4)
  - 4 Pirate's strongbox
  - 5 Public speaker
  - 6 Mexican chapeau
  - 12 High status
  - 14 Racehorse place
  - 16 Fish hawk
  - 18 Pinnacle
  - 19 Slow down
  - 22 Spinnaker, e.g.

### SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



### SOLUTIONS



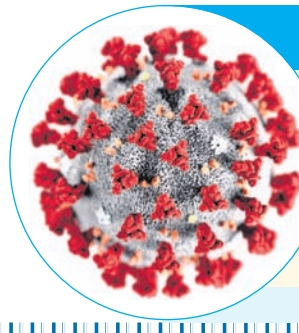
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## MUSIC SHOW

Artistes perform at 'Geetare Geetare Prashant Padhi' organised by SS Media Creation at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,58,95,234	65,85,95,073	68,44,093
India	4,48,45,401	4,42,50,649	5,31,190
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

# Dawn-to-dusk bandh in 14 dists hits life

BJD says BJP wants to instigate violence for political gains which has always been its strategy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 19:** Normal life in 14 districts of Odisha, including violence-hit Sambalpur, was affected Wednesday due to a 12-hour 'hartal' (strike) called by Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP).



Birsa Munda Chhak in Sambalpur wears a deserted look due to the 12-hour bandh, Wednesday

The dawn-to-dusk agitation has also been supported by the BJP, Bajrang Dal and other outfits of the Sangh Parivar.

Clashes were reported in Sambalpur April 12 and 14, following which curfew was imposed in the city and internet services were suspended in the district.

The prohibitory order clamped in Sambalpur city since the midnight of April 14 following large-scale violence during Hanuman Jayanti celebrations was, however, partially lifted but the suspension of internet services was extended by another 24 hours till 10am Thursday, an official said.

The strike was spontaneous in Sambalpur, with commercial establishments remaining shut and

a few vehicles plying the roads. In other districts, however, Hindutva activists were seen staging blockades on roads and urging people to shut their shops.

However, emergency services have been kept out of the purview of the hartal. Police personnel were deployed at important junctions in the affected districts to prevent any untoward incident.

- The strike was spontaneous in Sambalpur, with commercial establishments, except emergency services, remaining shut and a few vehicles plying the roads
- Police personnel were deployed at important junctions in the affected districts to prevent any untoward incident
- Suspension of internet services in Sambalpur district has been extended by another 24 hours



Student, youth and woman wings of Biju Janata Dal take out a candlelight rally in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, seeking restoration of peace and communal harmony in violence-hit Sambalpur

ASP, Sambalpur, Tapan Kumar Mohanty said there has been no report of any untoward incident in the district so far.

Besides Sambalpur, the hartal was observed in Bargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Subarnapur, Boudh, Nuapada, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri and Rayagada districts.

Agitators demanded stringent action against "those responsible" for the violence in Sambalpur.

"We will observe a statewide strike if no action is taken against those guilty within 48 hours," Subhansu Sekhar Satpathy, VHP

secretary, Odisha, said.

BJP state unit president Manmohan Samal alleged that the police acted in a partisan manner and allowed mischief-mongers to go scot-free and arrested some innocent people. Meanwhile, Sambalpur district administration relaxed curfew following improvement in situation. No fresh violence was reported since April 14.

"Curfew has been relaxed from 7am to 6pm as the situation has improved," Sambalpur Collector Ananya Das said. However, the state government extended the suspension of internet services by 24 hours till 10am Thursday across Sambalpur district.

The administration, however, provided internet services to banks and commercial establishments in some areas except Sambalpur city.

The Collector, along with Superintendent of Police B Gangadhar, held several peace committee meetings with representatives of localities and said normalcy is returning.

The BJD, on the other hand, accused the BJP of trying to "instigate violence" in Odisha.

BJD spokesperson Srimayee Mishra said party activists will bring out peace marches across the state Wednesday evening.

"It is extremely unfortunate that when peace is returning to Sambalpur, the Odisha BJP wants to instigate violence for political gains. This has always been their strategy. The police have taken tough action against those involved in the violence," she said in a statement.

Meanwhile, sources said the local administration has taken a decision to restore internet services in Kuchinda, Rairakhol, Naktideul, Jujumara, Bamra, and Jamankira regions.

## ASPIRATIONAL DIST PROG

### Krishan Kumar Central Prabhari for Rayagada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 19: Odisha cadre Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer and joint secretary to the Ministry of Commerce, Krishan Kumar has been appointed the Central Prabhari officer for tribal dominated Rayagada district as part of the Centre's aspirational district programme.

The Centre has recently issued a notification in this regard. He is expected to visit Rayagada district soon to review the implementation of Central schemes in the district.

Kumar was working as sub-collector in Gunupur from 2004 to 2006. Construction of a mini stadium and a blood bank in Gunupur was accomplished during his regime.

# CM to flag off Odisha Skill Conclave today

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 19:** In a bid to transform Odisha into a global skill hub and create a brighter future for its people and beyond, the state government is going to organise Odisha Skill Conclave here from April 20 to 22, 2023.

The conclave is being organised by Skill Development and Technical Education department and Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) as the industry partner.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate the conclave in the presence of Minister of State (Independent Charge), Skill Development & Technical Education

Pritiranjana Gharai, Principal Secretary Usha Padhee, FICCI president and MD of Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys (IMFA) Ltd Subhrakant Panda, Chief Secretary & Chief Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena and others.

The overarching goal of the event will be to develop and enhance the state's human resource potential and create opportunities by offering high quality, reasonably priced and easily accessible technical & vocational education and skill development training to all societal groups.

The conclave will witness signing of MoUs, conferences, exhibitions, demonstrations and cultural activities. It will also offer a plethora of opportunities to the skilled workforce from the state.

# Med officer held for taking bribe

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar/Jajpur, April 19:** Vigilance sleuths Wednesday arrested the medical officer and a security guard of a community health centre (CHC) in Jajpur on charges of bribery.

Jajpur's Danagadi CHC medical officer Pabitra Kumar Sethi was arrested while taking ₹20,000 from a man for providing the latter the post-mortem report of his son who died due to lightning March 31, the anti-corruption wing sleuths said.

Abhiram Kandi, a security guard at the state-run health facility, has also been taken into custody as the medical officer received the bribe amount through him, they said.

As per the state government scheme, an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh



the doctor was nabbed taking the bribe money through the security guard. The money was recovered from Sethi," an official release said.

While a case has been registered against Sethi under Section 7 of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 1988, simultaneous searches were on multiple locations related to him to unearth his alleged disproportionate assets.

Meanwhile, a head clerk in Puri was also arrested for receiving ₹5,000 bribe. Vigilance sources said Raghunath Bisoi, the head clerk at District Sub-Registrar Office in Puri was arrested while accepting ₹5,000 as bribe from a man to facilitate him a power of attorney.

The anti-corruption wing has registered a case (10/2023).

1% of Indians take home 22% of the country's income.

1% of Indians account for 45% of all flights.

3% of Indians make up all unique credit card holders.

2.6% of Indians invest in mutual funds.

8% of Indian households constitute 100% car ownership.

6.5% of Indian users account for about 44% of UPI transactions.

5% of Indian users account for about 33% of orders placed on Zomato.

7.4% of urban Indians read an English newspaper.

Do the math. Thank You.

SEWAGE TANK DEATHS

# NHRC issues notice to Chief Secretary



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 19:** National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Wednesday issued a show-cause notice against Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena over the death of two workers in a sewage tank in Cuttack city.

The commission has issued the notice to the Chief Secretary while hearing a petition filed by rights activist Akhand. As per the complaint, two workers engaged in cleaning of the sewage tank in Cuttack died of asphyxiation in April 2021.

In its report to the NHRC, the

that JE Pradyut Kumar Sahu and Deepak Kumar Naik, contractor are responsible for this unfortunate incident which reflects that the incident took place due to the negligence on the part of the government employees for which the state is vicariously liable as the human rights of the two deceased persons and one person undergoing treatment have been violated.

It has asked the Chief Secretary as to why a compensation of Rs 10 lakh should not be recommended to be paid to the next of kin of the deceased and to specify whether any compensation has been paid to the injured person for the negligence on the part of the government employees and nature of injury sustained by the injured.

The Chief Secretary was directed to reply to the show-cause notice within four weeks.

The rights panel recommended for a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the next of kin of the deceased

Bhubaneswar and Cuttack police commissioner said P Shankar and Bishnu Naik lost their lives while one D Shiva was under treatment. No prescribed protection was taken in cleaning an underground sewer network in CDA Sector-10 area April 15, 2021.

"During the departmental inquiry, it came to the light that Pradyut Kumar Sahu, junior engineer, Public Health and Engineering department (PHED) and Deepak Kumar Naik, director are responsible for this unfortunate incident," the commission said.

The NHRC further said the probe



CULTURAL SHOW: Students performing during the Annual Prize Giving Ceremony of BJEM School in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

# CM inaugurates foot centre, vending zone

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 19:** Giving new hope to the differently abled people of the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday inaugurated a new center of famous Jaipur Foot – Biju Mahaveer Jaipur Foot Centre in Khurda.

Stating that the disabled are an important part of the society, the Chief Minister said that their proper rehabilitation is the responsibility of all of us. He advised everyone to work together for this.



Chief Minister launched a foot centre in Khurda, Wednesday

OP PHOTOS

The state government is doing a lot for their welfare and to provide them better services. The Chief Minister said that steps are being taken to empower them through training along with their rehabilitation. He requested everyone's cooperation to help the disabled.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister praised the founder of Jaipur Foot Center, Mehta, and said that he has become a blessing to lakhs of people with disabilities today. His commitment to society is an inspiration to all. The Chief Minister said that the state government will provide all support for this campaign in Odisha.

The Chief Minister said that the Jaipur Foot is a unique product made with indigenous know-how, which can fully enable the differently-abled.

Jaipur Foot Center was established in 1975 by founder Padma

Bhushan DR Mehta in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Its name is Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS). The Chief Minister also launched a mobile vehicle to provide artificial limbs to the disabled.

The Minister for the Empowerment of the Disabled Ashok Panda said, "Under the leadership of the Chief Minister, the Department of the Empowerment of the Disabled has been successfully implementing various programs."

DR Mehta, founder of Jaipur Foot Center, in his welcome speech said that providing artificial limbs to the disabled is their social commitment. This organization, which has been operating for more than 50 years, continues its continuous



CM inaugurated a model women's vending zone at Dumduma in City

efforts to enable people with disabilities in many countries of the world today, he added.

Chief Minister also inaugurated a model women's vending zone at Dumuduma Wednesday.

There are 42 shops in this vending zone. The environment of this zone has been given a sophisticated look which includes good lighting, provision of drinking water and toilet facilities.

The inauguration ceremony was organised by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

Housing & Urban Development Minister Usha Devi, Science & Technology Minister Ashok Panda, Mayor Sulochana Das and corporators were present in the opening ceremony.

Continued from P1

# Survey of Mahanadi begins

Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said that the matter should not have gone to the tribunal. He asserted that the state has failed complete the construction of barrages on the Mahanadi due to the ongoing dispute.

"Mahanadi originates in Chhattisgarh and there is no dam here in the state; the controversy is over the seven barrages. As the matter went to the tribunal, we have stopped our high dam and barrage constructions. We think that we should get permission for the same as the entire water is going to Odisha," said the Chhattisgarh CM.

Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti Ministry Bishweswar Tudu said that the Centre's permission is not needed for construction of small barrages, as built by Chhattisgarh. He said that the Odisha government could have constructed small barrages on Mahanadi, if they had wanted to. Now as the election is round the corner, the state government is only doing drama, the minister said.

# CUO to showcase traditional games

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 19:** In a bid to promote country's traditional games, the Central University of Odisha (CUO) is going to conduct the Bharatiya Paramparik Kreed Mahotsava in collaboration with Kreed Bharati April 21-22.

The institution will organise such an event for the first time. In the two-day programme, various traditional games of India will be showcased. The purpose of this event is twofold: to create awareness about the traditional games of India, which are losing popularity in the modern days, and to rescue them from oblivion. The Union Minister of State for Education, Subhas Sarkar, will inaugurate the event. Chakradhar Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor of the University, will preside over the programme.



strate the traditional games. Out of them, five are from different parts of Odisha, two are from West Bengal and one group is from Assam. The proposed sports and games are Sports Yoga, Archery Demonstration, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Malkhamb and Rope Malkhamb (all from Odisha), Gatka, Kalarippayattu, Thang-Ta (Assam), Atya Patya (Demo), Gilli Danda (Demo) and Surya Namaskar (Demo). Apart from these events, the groups will also perform folk dances such as Chhau Nrutya (Odisha), Raibenshe Dance (West Bengal), Paika Yuddha Kaushal (Odisha), Bharatiya Yuddha Kaushal (West Bengal), Yogasana and Surya Namaskar (Odisha).

India's rich culture and history have always been deeply rooted in sports and games. Unfortunately, traditional games like Kho Kho, Pallanguzi, Lippa, Kabaddi, and Gilli Danda have been forgotten by today's youth since they are so absorbed in playing video games. Therefore, bringing back old games will have many beneficial effects on the health of young population, said an official.

In the two-day programme, eight groups of sportspersons will arrive at the university to demon-

# Temperatures over...



They are Nuapada (44.4 degrees), Bolangir (44), Boudh (43.9), Talcher (43.8), Angul (43.7) and Jharsuguda (43.6), Rourkela (43.3), Sambalpur (43.2), Titlagarh (43.1) and Sundargarh (43). Many other places including Sonepur (42.5), Bhubaneswar (42.5) and Cuttack (42.2) registered temperatures of more than 40 degree Celsius.

The IMD said there will be no major change in the day temperatures for the next couple of days. In most places temperatures will be 2-3 degrees Celsius above normal. It added that even though rainfall may bring temporary relief, the heatwave will return again to torment the people of the state.

IMD officials also informed that people while going out will have to take proper protective measures to tackle the heatwave. All district collectors and other officials have been asked to monitor the situation on a regular basis. The present heatwave is expected to continue for another 3-4 days after which rainfall will reduce temperatures in certain districts of Odisha.

# Telescopes on the Moon could transform astronomy

Lunar exploration is undergoing a renaissance. Dozens of missions, organised by multiple space agencies – and increasingly by commercial companies – are set to visit the Moon by the end of this decade.

Most of these will involve small robotic spacecraft, but NASA's ambitious Artemis programme, aims to return humans to the lunar surface by the middle of the decade.

There are various reasons for all this activity, including geopolitical posturing and the search for lunar resources, such as water-ice at the lunar poles, which can be extracted and turned into hydrogen and oxygen propellant for rockets.

The Moon still has much to tell us about the origin and evolution of the solar system. It also has scientific value as a platform for observational astronomy.

The potential role for astronomy of Earth's natural satellite was discussed at a Royal Society meeting earlier this year.

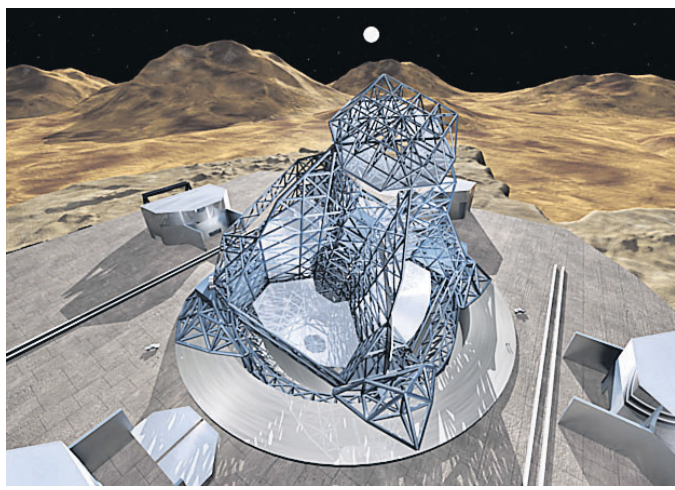
Far side benefits

Several types of astronomy would benefit. The most obvious is radio astronomy which can be conducted from the side of the Moon that always faces away from Earth – the far side.

The lunar far side is permanently shielded from the radio signals generated by humans on Earth. During the lunar night, it is also protected from the Sun.

These characteristics make it probably the most "radio-quiet" location in the whole solar system as no other planet or moon has a side that permanently faces away from the Earth. It is therefore ideally suited for radio astronomy.

Radio waves are a form of elec-



tromagnetic energy – as are, for example, infrared, ultraviolet and visible-light waves. They are defined by having different wave-

lengths in the electromagnetic spectrum. Radio waves with wavelengths longer than about 15m are blocked by Earth's ionosphere.

But radio waves at these wavelengths reach the Moon's surface unimpeded. For astronomy, this is the last unexplored region of the electromagnetic spectrum, and it is best studied from the lunar far side.

Observations of the cosmos at these wavelengths come under the umbrella of "low frequency radio astronomy". These wavelengths are uniquely able to probe the structure of the early universe, especially the cosmic "dark ages" – an era before the first galaxies formed.

Signals from other stars

Another potential application of far side radio astronomy is trying to detect radio waves from charged particles trapped by magnetic fields – magnetospheres – of planets orbiting other stars.

This would help to assess how capable these exoplanets are of host-

ing life. Radio waves from exoplanet magnetospheres would probably have wavelengths greater than 100m, so they would require a radio-quiet environment in space.

Crater depths

The Moon also offers opportunities for other types of astronomy as well. Astronomers have lots of experience with optical and infrared telescopes operating in free space, such as the Hubble telescope and JWST. However, the stability of the lunar surface may confer advantages for these types of instrument.

The cold, stable environment of permanently shadowed craters may also have advantages for the next generation of instruments to detect gravitational waves – "ripples" in space-time caused by processes such as exploding stars and colliding black holes.

# FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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CLEANLINESS IS GODLINESS: NCC cadets of Rambha Girls' High School in Ganjam district cleaning plastic and other waste dumped by tourists from Rambha jetty in Chilika lake as part of Punit Sagar Abhiyan, Wednesday

9 ARRESTED, 12 CARS SEIZED MAJOR RAID ON SMUGGLERS' DEN

Bargarh/Sohela, April 19: In a major breakthrough, a special squad of police has arrested 9 people who were allegedly involved in smuggling activities, from a hideout at the backyard of Rajasthani Dhaba in Luhurachati under Sohela Police Station in the district. The raid took place late Tuesday night and the police seized an amount of ₹2,54,440 in cash, 12 costly cars, and other equipment used in smuggling.



vehicles, the police have also recovered three packs of playing cards, foreign liquor, and nine mobile phones from their possession. The accused have been produced before the court Wednesday. According to the police, they had been keeping a close watch on the smuggling activities happening in the nearby area, and they will continue their vigilance in the future as well.

In a 1st, IoT device to check tax evasion in Joda mines



Joda, April 19: The state government has introduced modern technology to check large-scale tax evasion in iron ore mines and irregularities in iron ore types under Joda mining circle in Keonjhar district, a report said Wednesday. The state government has applied this new technology for the first time ever, sources from the Mining department said.

Pvt schools mushroom in Jajpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Korei, April 19: Private schools have illegally mushroomed in various parts of this block in Jajpur district in violation of government guidelines sans proper infrastructure, a report said Wednesday. Such schools are only increasing in number day by day due to lack of any action on part of the district and block administration.

GUIDELINES THROWN TO THE WINDS



still remains to be implemented. According to reports, there are over 40 such schools functioning in Korei block. Most of these schools are functioning without having the minimum facilities of drinking water, playground, toilets and necessary classrooms.

According to reports, there are over 40 such schools functioning in Korei block alone. Most of these schools are functioning sans minimum facilities of drinking water, playground, toilets and necessary classrooms

essary CoR and infrastructure. Moreover, it has appointed some inexperienced teachers to teach the students and charging hefty sum from the guardians towards admission and school fees.

Elderly falls from mango tree, dies

Rupsa: An elderly man died after he fell down accidentally on the ground while plucking mangoes from a tree at Mulida village under Basta police limits in Balasore district, Wednesday.



Allu Arjun in Malkangiri for Pushpa-II shoot



Malkangiri, April 19: Telugu film star Allu Arjun was spotted in Malkangiri district for the shooting of his upcoming movie 'Pushpa-II', sources said Wednesday.



the movie will also be shot in Malkangiri district. Fans from all over India are eagerly waiting for the 'Pushpa-II' movie.

It can be mentioned here that 'Pushpa-II' isn't the first movie of the Telugu star to be shot in Odisha. Earlier, his movie 'Arya' was also shot in Odisha's Rayagada.

MARKET WATCH table with columns for INDEX and VARIATION, listing SENSEX, NIFTY, DOLLAR, EURO, GOLD, and SILVER.

WEATHER table with columns for Bhub and Ctk, listing temperature, humidity, and rainfall.

Emergency mock drill at PPL



Dalai congratulated the PPL management for showing extraordinary team work during such emergency rescue operation. The PPL team led by Chief Manufacturing Officer & Unit Head Pranab Bhattacharyya displayed a brilliant procedure to be followed in the wake of an ammonia leakage scenario.

Paradip: Paradeep Phosphates Limited successfully conducted a mock drill on ammonia leakage scenario from ammonia supply line, Wednesday. On the direction of Asst. Director (Factories & Boilers) CK Dalai, the exercise was conducted at the plant site.

PUBLIC NOTICE regarding Project Penguda Sand Quarry located at village Penguda under Gunupur Tahasil of Rayagada Dist. Odisha.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RWSS DIVISION, KORAPUT. National Competitive Bidding Through E-Procurement.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, LOWER SUKTEL R.R.C & B DIVISION, BOLANGIR. e-procurement Notice Bid identification NO.-LSRR&BD-BGR-02/2023-24.

6-month jail to woman in cheque bounce case

Bhadrak: A local court sentenced a woman to six months of imprisonment after convicting her in a cheque bounce case of ₹65 lakh under Negotiable Instruments Act, Wednesday.

NOTICE FOR LOSS OF DOCUMENTS. Notice is hereby given on behalf of my client PNB HOUSING FINANCE LTD. Bhubaneswar for advancing Loan against property to Smt. Manorama Dalai, age 53 year.

Notice Under Order 5 rule 20 of C.P.C. IN THE COURT OF THE DISTRICT JUDGE AT CUTTACK I.A.NO 1/2022 (Arising out of R.F.A No. 485 of 2022) Indranil Mitra and others

EAST COAST RAILWAY Tender Notice No.: SBP-ELECT-2023-T-159 Name of Work: ELECTRICAL WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH PROVISION OF 12 M WIDE FOOT OVER BRIDGE.

The cup has to be left clean and empty for the divine liquor to be poured into it.

SRI AUROBINDO



Invest in Forests

Even before taking office in January 2023, Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula de Silva promised to end illegal deforestation in the Amazon.

They have a point. The value of intact forests, especially the vast tropical biomes in the Amazon, Congo, and Indonesia, is immense.

Most climate scientists agree that the only way to reverse global warming is by phasing out the use of fossil fuels and ensuring that more greenhouse gases are removed from the atmosphere than are emitted.

The key is to protect forests, which cover 31 per cent of the Earth's land surface (around four billion hectares) and are a net carbon sink, absorbing an estimated seven billion metric tons of carbon dioxide per year even after discounting all emissions from deforestation and other land-use change.



Tasso Azevedo & Ilona Szabó

One solution for safeguarding our forests involves planting trees to compensate for those that have been felled.

But equally important is the conservation of old-growth tropical forests, which can serve as an important carbon sink when they are well preserved.

One increasingly popular approach is to place a monetary value on keeping trees in the ground.

All of these strategies – from planting trees to carbon offsets – are necessary to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

The question is how to accomplish such ambitious objectives. We believe that a global incentive mechanism – in short, paying individuals, entities, or even states to preserve forests – is the best way forward.

To have an impact at scale, this innovative source of financing should encourage accelerated investment by ensuring that conservation yields tangible returns.

The basic premise is to create a system that pays annually per hectare of forest preserved. To fast-track implementation, the mechanism's design must be simple and intuitive.

Obviously, funding a project along these lines requires global buy-in and coordination. One idea is to implement a type of carbon tax – a fee on every barrel of oil, ton of coal, or cubic meter of gas produced on the planet.

Despite the difficulty of executing such a scheme, we can't afford to throw up our hands. Every day, the trees in the Amazon rainforest release 20 billion tons of water vapor into the atmosphere.

We must not view tackling deforestation as a long-term goal, as though we could afford to emit now and capture later. Climate change won't wait.

Tasso Azevedo is General Coordinator of MapBiomass. Ilona Szabó is a member of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

Keep your face always toward the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you. WALT WHITMAN

Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans. JOHN LENNON

In the long run, the sharpest weapon of all is a kind and gentle spirit. ANNE FRANK

WORDSWORTH

Head over heels

That's pretty much a set phrase these days, so that to be head over heels almost always means that one has fallen madly in love in an impetuous and unconstrained way.



Anita Saluja

THE BJP IS FACING AN UPHILL TASK. THERE IS ANTI-INCUMBENCY. THE PARTY IS ALSO FACING CORRUPTION CHARGES WITH THE TAG OF '40 PER CENT COMMISSION SARKAR'

Winning the Karnataka Assembly elections, slated for May 10, is crucial as much for the Opposition Congress, as it is for the BJP, which is in power both in the state and at the Centre.

The Karnataka Assembly elections have wider political ramifications as this is the first contest between the BJP and the Congress after Rahul Gandhi's successful completion of his Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

Significantly, the Congress lost governments to the BJP in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, besides Maharashtra, where it was part of the state-level Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi coalition.

The BJP is working hard to reassert its 'double-engine government' theory. This is the formula of the BJP to expand its footprint across the states.

FOCUS ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

CRUCIAL KARNATAKA



The Karnataka Assembly elections have wider political ramifications as this is the first contest between the BJP and the Congress after Rahul Gandhi's successful completion of his Bharat Jodo Yatra

The Congress is struggling hard to put up a united face. But, the Chief Ministerial ambitions of Karnataka PCC President DK Shiva Kumar and former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah could cast a shadow on the party's poll prospects.

The BJP too is desperately trying hard to retain power in Karnataka, which is the only state, south of the Vindhyas, where the saffron party has a strong base.

However, all is not well in the saffron party in Karnataka. The BJP is facing an uphill task. There is anti-incumbency. The party is also facing corruption charges with the tag of '40 per cent Commission Sarkar'.

Ever since BS Yediyurappa was replaced as Chief Minister by Basavaraj Bommai there has been deep resentment in the party.

hitting the party in the face, the Chief Minister seems to have seized upon the plank of Hindutva sensing that it not only can unite but galvanize the party cadre in the crucial election time.

Prime Minister Modi continues to be the star campaigner for the BJP. However, Modi has the unenviable task of having to inject a fighting spirit in the saffron party.

Given the close fight between the two national parties, the Janata Dal (Secular) is unlikely to make much of an impact on the outcome of the Assembly elections.

The writer is a Delhi-based senior journalist and political commentator.

SPECTRUM HISTORY

Despatches from a neglected past



Anwesh Satpathy

THE QUESTION OF MOVING AWAY FROM ESTABLISHED 'MAINSTREAM' HISTORY HAS BEEN GAINING TRACTION IN RECENT YEARS

The question of moving away from established "mainstream" history has been gaining traction in recent years. A spate of successful best-selling books on overlooked figures like Subhash Bose, Vallabhai Patel, Bhagat Singh, and Savarkar testify to a desire among the masses to explore the alternative revolutionary movement of the Independence movement.

Indian historiography's other glaring loophole, Sampath points out in the introduction, is its focus on Delhi. Thus, the Ahoms of Assam, the Karkotas of Kashmir and the Vijayanagara Empire are reduced to being "regional" history while the relatively smaller (and briefer) Delhi Sultanate is treated as "national history".

Nevertheless, we never get a clear answer as to the common values or common historical civilization that they defended.

As one reads the narratives in the book, the difficulty in constructing even a brief episode comes to light. For many "bravehearts" included in the book, the written record is scarce. Thus, in many instances, Sampath does not shy away from using oral narratives as a supplement to the written record.

What is lacking in the book, however, is a shared narrative. Had Sampath been content to only tell us stories of brave warriors of India, this book might have been just fine.

Nevertheless, we never get a clear answer as to the common values or common historical civilization that they defended. How does one decide who is to be included and who is to be excluded? Many of the warriors in the book fought against Mughal emperors.

For the sake of smooth narrative, historical nuances are often skimmed over in this book. The most glaring instance of this is Sampath's account of the invasion of Sindh in the first chapter.

Caliph's harem. Enraged, the Caliph orders Qasim to be arrested and sent to Baghdad in a leather box which results in his death from suffocation. The daughters of Dahir confess their lie which results in them being buried alive as "true warriors".

Nevertheless, the book still serves as a good introductory work to these figures who are largely unknown outside of their own region.

The author is a writer and a student at Jindal School of International Affairs.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID.

OrissaPOST B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Cyber menace

Sir, There seems to be no respite from the increasing cybercrime menace in our country. With new improved techniques, the technically qualified fraudsters are siphoning off in no time the hard-earned money of bank account holders.

Shot in arm

Sir, Former Karnataka Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar snapped a four-decade-long tie with the BJP and joined the Congress after being denied a ticket to contest the May 10 Assembly elections.

Craft & adroitness

Sir, Playing only in his second game in IPL after warming up the bench for two seasons, Arjun Tendulkar, son of legendary cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar, has already impressed everyone with his left-arm seam bowling.

Sanjib Kumar Das, CUTTACK

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

# national



**I will resign if it is proven that I called up Amit Shah over TMC's national party status**  
MAMATA BANERJEE | BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

## OVER 50 KIDS FALL ILL AT SHELTER HOME

More than 50 children at a temporary shelter home in Assam's Nagaon district suddenly fell ill Wednesday for unknown reasons, an official said. The incident took place in the Doboka area



### of the day quote

Drug traders are the main culprits as the drug consumers are the victims. We have to take a ruthless approach against the drug traders and the strongest possible action should be taken against them  
**AMIT SHAH** | UNION HOME MINISTER

For making the call to Delhi, you used a landline. I'd expose you in due time. Wait for my befitting reply tomorrow  
**SUVENDU ADHIKARI** | LEADER OF THE OPPN IN THE WB LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Our priority is to help people affected by inflation. We need to spread awareness about Mehangaai Rahat Camps and ensure that people can access its benefits  
**ASHOK GEHLOT** | RAJASTHAN CM

## SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

# NO DATA TO BACK CENTRE'S 'URBAN ELITIST' CLAIM: SC

*The Centre, in one of its affidavits filed in the top court, termed the petitions a reflection of "urban elitist" view for the purpose of social acceptance & said recognition of marriage is essentially a legislative function which the courts should refrain from adjudicating*

should refrain from adjudicating. Apparently agreeing with the submissions of senior advocate A M Singh, appearing for one of the petitioners, the bench said, "When you say that this is an innate characteristic then it is also an argument in response to the contention (of the Centre) this is elitist or urban or it has a certain class bias."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 19: The state cannot discriminate against an individual on the basis of sexual characteristic over which the person has no control, the Supreme Court said Wednesday, asserting the Centre has no data to back up its claim that the concept of same-sex marriage is "elitist" or "urban". The apex court was hearing a batch of petitions seeking legal sanction for same-sex marriage.

"When something is innate, then it cannot have the class bias. It may be more urban in its manifestations because the people in urban areas are coming out of closed closet. Anyway, no data is forthcoming from the government to indicate that this is urban. No data at all," observed the bench, also comprising Justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha. Singhvi stressed that every averment made by the Centre in the affidavit is without a "single survey, single data".

"It is very simple, the State cannot discriminate against an individual on the basis of a characteristic over which the person has no control," a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said on the second day of day-long hearing on the pleas.

At the start of the day's hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, filed a fresh affidavit urging the bench that all states and Union Territories be made parties to the proceedings as any decision on the issue without obtaining their views will render the present "adversarial exercise" incomplete and truncated.

The Centre, in one of its affidavits filed in the apex court, termed the petitions a reflection of "urban elitist" view for the purpose of social acceptance and said recognition of marriage is essentially a legislative function which the courts

views will render the present "adversarial exercise" incomplete and truncated. During the hearing, the bench also deliberated upon the consequences of legalising same-sex marriage including adoption and different marriageable age for male and female.



**Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud's remark came after the centre's submission that the petitions seeking gay marriage rights reflect 'urban elitist views'**

### SHORT TAKES

#### 6 killed, 14 hurt in two accidents

**Ujjain/Sehore:** Six persons, including three women, were killed and 14 injured in two road accidents in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore and Ujjain districts in the past 24 hours, police said. Around 2 pm Wednesday, a van carrying 17 persons overturned and fell into a gorge at Pali Ghat near Budhni in Sehore district, Sub Divisional Officer of Police Shashank Gurjar said. The van was carrying a few residents of Adampur village and was going towards Salkanpur, he said. Three women were killed and 14 injured in the accident, he said. In Ujjain district, two minor boys and another person were killed when their car hit a tree on Ujjain-Dewas Road late Tuesday night, Madhav Nagar police station in-charge Manish Lodha said.

#### PM Modi to visit Kerala for 2 days

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive in Kerala April 24 for a two-day visit and attend a host of programmes including the flagging off of the much-awaited Vande Bharat Express train here. The BJP state unit, which is making all arrangements to accord a grand reception to the PM, shared a poster on Facebook announcing his visit, saying the "world leader" was coming to Kerala and tens of thousands of people would take part in a huge road show in Kochi April 24.

#### Over 100 shops gutted in Howrah

**Howrah:** Over 100 shops were gutted as a massive fire devastated a market in West Bengal's Howrah district in the early hours of Wednesday, officials said. The fire broke out at the Ludlow Bazar in Chengail in Uluberia police station area around midnight, they said. It spread fast, gutting over 100 shops, many of which were temporary structures. Ten fire tenders brought the blaze under control after fighting it for over four hours, officials said.

#### Building collapses

**Chennai:** A 70-year-old building in Chennai, which was under renovation, collapsed Wednesday, leading to the injuries of two people, while four others were feared trapped in the debris. According to witnesses, the two injured persons were standing near the building in Parry's Corner when it collapsed. They have been admitted to the Government Stanley Medical College.

## Atiq killers sent to police custody

AGENCIES

**Prayagraj (UP), April 19:** The three persons accused of killing gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed and his brother Mohammad Ashraf were sent to police custody for four days by the court of chief judicial magistrate here Wednesday. Loveesh Tiwari, Mohit and Arun Kumar Maurya were produced in the court amid tight security Wednesday morning as the police sought a seven-day remand. Passing the order later, the court sent them to police custody for four days - from 2 pm Wednesday till 5 pm April 23, district government advocate Gulab Chandra Agrahari said. Atiq Ahmad (60) and his brother Ashraf were shot dead at point-blank range by three men posing as journalists in the middle of a media interaction on Saturday night while police personnel were escorting them to a medical college in Prayagraj for a checkup.

An FIR under Indian Penal Code sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder) and under the Arms Act was registered against the three alleged assailants of Atiq and Ashraf at Shahganj police station. Meanwhile, five policemen were suspended in Prayagraj. The suspended police officers include Shahganj SHO Ashwani Kumar Singh, a sub-inspector and three constables. The SIT probe into the incident has revealed negligence of duty on the part of the policemen.

## Cov threat: PMO reviews situation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 19:** Amid rising cases of coronavirus across the country, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, PK Mishra, Wednesday undertook a review meeting to oversee the level of preparedness and public health response to it.

According to sources in the know of things, Mishra advised officials to ensure operational readiness of hospital infrastructure till the sub-district level. He also highlighted the need to examine the Covid-19 situation regularly and update advisories to guide the states.

Mishra also exhorted upon continuation of the ongoing time-tested strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour among the people. A presentation was made by Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan during the meeting, where he provided an overview of the global Covid-19 situation. He highlighted that India has been witnessing a rapid increase in the number of Covid-19 cases with the majority of cases being reported in eight states, namely Kerala, Delhi, Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Rajasthan. The Health Secretary further

## Cabinet gives nod to Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 19:** The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023 that has provisions to curb transmission of pirated film content on the internet, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said.

Briefing reporters on the decisions of the Union Cabinet, Thakur said the bill will be introduced in the upcoming session of Parliament. He said the bill also has provisions to classify films on the basis of age group, instead of the current practice of 'U', 'A', and 'UA'.

"U" is for unrestricted public exhibition and "A" is restricted to adult audiences, while "UA" is for unrestricted public exhibition subject to parental guidance for children below the age of 12 and "S" for special category audiences such as doctors and scientists. It is learnt that the amendments seek to add new classification - "UA-7+", "UA-13+" and "UA-16+" in place for 12 years. Besides improving the process to certify films by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), the amendments also seek to bring about uniformity in categorisation of films and content across platforms.

The amendments are also expected to harmonise the law with executive orders and various Supreme Court judgements.

## Cabinet nod for National Quantum Mission

*India will be the seventh country to have a dedicated quantum mission after the US, Austria, Finland, France, Canada and China*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 19:** The government Wednesday approved the National Quantum Mission to nurture and scale up scientific and industrial research and development in quantum technology.

Minister Narendra Modi, will accelerate quantum technology-led economic growth and nurture the ecosystem in the country.

"NQM is going to give India a quantum jump in this arena," Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh told reporters here. "They are also at the R&D stage. None of them has started any applications of it (quantum technology). We are also going to be at par," Singh said. He said satellite-based secure quantum communications between ground stations over a range of 2000 km within India, long distance secure quantum communications with other countries, intercity quantum key distribution over 2,000 km as well as multi-node quantum network with quantum memories are also some of the deliverables of the mission. The National Quantum Mission will

## Air pollution, heat linked to lower sleep quality: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 19:** Air pollution, heat, and high levels of carbon dioxide and ambient noise may all adversely affect our ability to get a good night's sleep, according to a study.

and sleep logs, higher bedroom levels of air pollution (particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in size or PM2.5), carbon dioxide, noise, and temperature were all linked independently to lower sleep efficiency.

The research, published in the journal Sleep Health, is one of the first to measure multiple environmental variables in the bedroom and analyse their associations with sleep efficiency—the time spent sleeping relative to the time available for sleep.

"These findings highlight the importance of the bedroom environment for high-quality sleep," said study lead author Mathias Basner, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, US. In addition to work and family obligations that compete with sleep for time, a quickly changing environment due to growing urbanisation and climate change seems to have made it harder to get a good night's sleep,



the researchers said. Sleep that is of inadequate duration, or inadequate efficiency due to frequent disruption, affects work productivity and quality of

The team, including researchers from the University of Louisville, US, recruited participants from the National Institutes of Health Green Heart Project that investigates the effects of planting 8,000 mature trees on the cardiovascular health of Louisville residents.

For each of the environmental variables measured, the researchers compared sleep efficiency during

exposures to the highest 20 per cent of levels versus lowest 20 per cent of levels.

They found that high noise was associated with a 4.7 per cent decline in sleep efficiency, high carbon dioxide with a 4 per cent reduction, high temperature with a 3.4 per cent decline, and high PM2.5 with a 3.2 per cent reduction. Two other sleep environment variables, relative humidity and barometric pressure, appeared to have no significant association with sleep efficiency among the participants, according to the researchers.

**Sleep that is of inadequate duration, or inadequate efficiency due to frequent disruption, affects work productivity and quality of life**  
**It also has been linked to a higher risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression, and dementia**

# 'Every 3rd coal worker in J'khand prefers farming'



**INDIA HAS SET A TARGET FOR ACHIEVING NET-ZERO BY 2070 AND IS FOCUSED ON A 'COAL PHASE-DOWN' APPROACH**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 19:** One in every three coal workers in Jharkhand prefers agriculture as an alternative livelihood option once India moves away from coal and towards clean energy sources to meet its net-zero goals, according to a new study. The study on alternative livelihoods aimed to provide insights into how India could transition to a more sustainable economy in a way that is equitable and inclusive for all stakeholders. Jharkhand has 113 operational mines that account for over one-fourth (26 per cent) of all coal mines in India, and generate more than 115 MT of coal every year. The coal mining industry in Jharkhand supports nearly 3 lakh direct coal mining jobs, 38 per cent of all such jobs in India. Ultimately, India must prioritise the expansion of renewable energy sources to meet its growing energy needs. The study, 'Livelihood Opportunities for a Just Transition

in Jharkhand', the first-of-its-kind by Climate Trends, in partnership with Ernst & Young LLP, was released in the backdrop of India's G20 presidency. The survey was primarily aimed at exploring the kind and type of livelihood opportunities that will enable a just energy transition in Jharkhand in a future where coal plants are phased down and renewables ramped up in line with the government policies and targets. The study was conducted across five districts - Ranchi, Dhanbad, Ramgarh, Chatra and Bokaro - among 6,000 coal workers. Among those, 4,000 workers were from the organised sector (thermal power plants and mines), and 2,000 unorganised workers, along with 26 policy and sectoral experts. It was aimed at understanding the challenges and opportunities of transitioning away from coal and to clean energy sources in a coal-rich state such as Jharkhand. At least 20 focussed group discussions (FGDs) were conducted among the respondents, which were aimed to highlight the workers' voice, as the state transitions away from coal. Arindam Banerjee, Project Director, Policy and Communications Advisory Unit, Chief Minister's Office in Jharkhand, said, "This report is a significant contribution to the ongoing discussion on India's transition to clean energy sources and

Jharkhand has 113 operational mines that account for over one-fourth (26 per cent) of all coal mines in India. The coal mining industry in Jharkhand supports nearly 3 lakh direct coal mining jobs, 38 per cent of all such jobs in India.

its impact on vulnerable communities." Aarti Khosla, Director, Climate Trends, told IANS that with India's commitment to reach net-zero by 2070, abatement of coal does become an important consideration. Equally important is to undertake scientific mine closure, ensure additional power needs are met by renewables, and take socio-economic parameters of communities in account as and when mines are shut. "Focus is on India this year, and as the hosts of G20 there is an opening to seize the momentum and demonstrate that India's energy future is dominated by clean energy. This report establishes the need for skill development to help local communities tide over the transition to clean energy systems." "It offers recommendations to confidently embrace the policy level, sectoral level, and individual level changes the energy transition goals will bring," she added. India has set a target for achieving net-zero by 2070 and is focused on a 'coal phase-down' approach. However, a coal phase-down threatens the livelihoods of millions of workers and communities who depend on the coal sector for their sustenance and livelihoods across multiple states in the country. The impact of such a phase-down will be higher for states such as Jharkhand with a large number of mines and high levels of coal production. "The findings of the report are crucial in shaping policy decisions on a just transition plan for Jharkhand and other coal-rich states in India," said Amit Kumar, Associate Partner, Ernst & Young LLP.



**SUNNY DAY:** Students use scarves and umbrellas to shield themselves from the hot summer sun while returning from school, in Ranchi, Wednesday. PTI PHOTO

# No religious event allowed on roads: UP govt

*Under no circumstances should any religious event be held by obstructing roads and traffic, says an official release*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, April 19:** In view of upcoming festivals like Eid and Akshay Tritiya, the Uttar Pradesh government Wednesday issued directions regarding holding programmes in the state and ordered that no religious event be held by obstructing roads and traffic. Principal Secretary (Home) Sanjay Prasad, Director General of Police (DGP) RK Vishwakarma and other senior officials held a review meeting with all field officials posted in the state through video conferencing and issued necessary guidelines, an official



release said. There should be adequate arrangements for the security of religious places and additional police forces should be deployed in sensitive areas, DGP Vishwakarma said.

Prasad directed all the concerned officers posted in the field to ensure that religious programmes, worshipping, etc take place at the designated places only. Under no circumstances should any religious event be held by obstructing roads and traffic, the release said. "In the past, we have been able to do this through communication. This year also, we have to make the same effort," he said. According to the release, no religious procession or any other procession should be taken out without due permission. Permission should be given only to those religious processions that are traditional, and unnecessary permission should not be given to new events, it said. The principal secretary also told the officers to be vigilant about social media and ensure immediate response to any attempt aimed to spread fake news. A senior officer

should do a refutation of rumour/fake news, he said. "The safety of every citizen in the state is the primary responsibility of all of us. The month of Ramzan is going on. Eid-ul-Fitr, Akshaya Tritiya and Parshuram Jayanti are likely to be celebrated on the same day April 22. In view of the present environment, the police will have to be extra careful," Prasad said. "Deal sternly with those issuing mischievous statements. Strict action should be taken against the chaotic elements that try to cause harm to the peaceful atmosphere in the state," he said. DGP Vishwakarma took the details of the preparations made for the upcoming festivals from all the zone/range/district level officers and instructed that police force should continuously patrol congested areas and senior officers should also participate in it.

# Ram Lalla to be depicted as an archer at Ayodhya temple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ayodhya, April 19:** The idol of Ram Lalla to be installed at the under-construction temple in Ayodhya will be in the form of an archer and carved out of 'krishna shila' or black stone from Karnataka, the trust entrusted with the work has decided. The five-foot-tall idol will be carved by Arun Yogiraj, a noted sculptor from Mysuru. At its two-day meeting which concluded here late Tuesday evening, the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust finalised the specifications of the idol. The new idol of Lord Ram, in his five-year-old avatar, will be five-foot tall. The idol will be in a standing posture armed with a bow and



arrow, trust member Swami Teerth Prasannyacharya said here Wednesday. "Arun Yogiraj will carve the idol out of stone brought to Ayodhya from Karnataka's Karkar and Hegge Deven Kote villages.... The sculptor will finalise the stone which the idol will be carved out of," he added. Trust general secretary Champat Rai said they selected 'krishna shila' following consultations among seers, geologists, sculptors, experts

of Hindu scriptures and trust of force-bearers. Devotees are eagerly waiting for the new idol of Ram Lalla that is to be placed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple on the festival of Makar Sankranti next year, he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi performed the bhoomi puja for the construction of the temple August 2, 2020. The temple is being constructed following the Supreme Court verdict in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute. In its ruling November 9, 2019, the Supreme Court mandated that a Ram temple be built on the 2.77-acre site where the Babri Masjid once stood and that five acres be set aside for the construction of a mosque within the district of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

# Bandh for 100% local quota in govt jobs gets mixed response

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, April 19:** Public transport was affected and schools remained closed as the 12-hour shutdown by several students' organisations demanding 100 per cent reservation for locals in state government jobs evoked a mixed response in Jharkhand Wednesday. Members of different organisations under the banner of the Jharkhand State Students' Union (JSSU) took to the streets to enforce a state-wide shutdown, which began at 6am. Several student leaders were detained across the state for blocking roads by burning tyres and creating a ruckus, police said. Long-route buses were mostly off the roads and schools remained closed in many districts. However, shops, offices and business establishments were open in most of the districts, and auto-rickshaws operated as usual. "Over 30 bandh supporters were detained in Ranchi for trying to create disturbance in traffic move-

**Several student leaders detained across the state for blocking roads by burning tyres and creating a ruckus**

ment," Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kishor Kaushal said. He said the district administration made an elaborate arrangement in view of the bandh. "Situation remained normal at railway stations and bus stands in Ranchi city," Kaushal said. Around 2,500 security personnel were deployed in the city to maintain the law and order situation, officials said. The Jharkhand Academic Council (JAC) cancelled the scheduled examinations in view of the bandh. In Dumka and Sahibganj districts, markets and business establishments were shut, buses were off the roads, and schools and colleges remained closed. However, government offices functioned as usual. Normal life was largely unaffected in Dhanbad, Jamshedpur and Godda as shops and business establishments were open and auto-rickshaws plied as usual. The student organisations have been protesting since Monday as part of their 72-hour agitation programme, demanding 100 per cent reservation for locals in government jobs. On Tuesday evening, the protesters took out a torchlight march in Ranchi. They had attempted to gherao Chief Minister Hemanta Soren's residence Monday but were stopped by the police. JSSU leader Devendra Mahto said, "This government had promised 100 per cent reservation in government jobs for locals but has opened the door to students from outside the state, forcing us to call the bandh." Instead of implementing the 1992 'khatiyari' (land settlement) based recruitment scheme, it brought back an old employment policy under which 60 per cent of the seats will be reserved for underprivileged students, while 40 per cent will be open to all, he said.

# Alarm over stray dog menace in Taj city

This issue is being vociferously raised in the campaign to local bodies' elections now underway

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Agra, April 19:** An alarm has been raised in the Taj city and neighbouring districts after a series of violent attacks by stray dogs, leading to deaths. Citizens groups in Agra, Mathura, Firozabad have demanded drastic action against violent and aggressive dogs to contain the growing canine menace. Already these cities are facing a huge simian menace. The Agra municipal corporation estimates that there are more than 60,000 dogs in the city. Each day 500 cases of dog bites are reported. In the past six months, more than 10,000 dogs have been sterilized. Dr Ajay Singh, animal welfare officer said the target is to sterilize 60,000 stray dogs. The family members of the victims said the dogs had turned aggressive and violent. The people were feeling terrorised and were even scared to walk on the roads.



Recently a two-year-old girl was brutally mauled and killed by dogs in the Malpura area. In Aligarh, a doctor on a morning walk was fatally mauled by a herd of aggressive dogs. The university administration has formed three teams of dog-catchers from the Aligarh Nagar Nigam. Over a dozen dogs were caught. The Nagar Nigam teams of dog-catchers will carry out more dog-catching drives in residential

**The cities in the Taj Trapezium Zone are facing a huge, bovine, canine, and simian menace, threatening human life**

university administration. While animal rights activists resist action against stray dogs and appeal to people to feed them regularly, the ordinary citizens of the cities want them killed. This issue is being vociferously raised in the campaign to local bodies elections now underway. The cities in the Taj Trapezium Zone are facing a huge, bovine, canine, and simian menace, threatening human life, says social activist Mukta Gupta. To compound the problem is the news that the district hospitals are running short of anti-rabies injections. The municipalities must wake up to the emerging threat, Mukta adds.



**STRIKE-STRUCK:** Police personnel use lathi charge to disperse protesters while students staged a demonstration against Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren over the employment policy, in Ranchi, Wednesday. PTI PHOTO



# national

## of the day quote

The situation is tense due to the deployment of PLA troops in the northern sector. Our armed forces, especially the Indian Army, will have to continuously keep their vigilance in order to maintain the security of the LAC

Congress has given everything to Azad and Scindia and both were asked to attack the party. Isn't it embarrassing for both of them? It is an embarrassment

Though the drone policy of the state was framed way back, much is to be done to fully adopt and give practical shape to it

## SHORT TAKES

### LS polls: EC begins preparations

**New Delhi:** The Election Commission has started preparing for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls by commencing the manufacturing of 8.92 lakh new Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) machines and retiring 2.71 lakh such M2 model machines, sources said on Wednesday. They also said the poll panel has identified 3.43 lakh VVPATs for "preventive maintenance" and 2.43 lakh for upgrade to reduce machine replacement rate. The poll panel undertakes the exercise of checking electronic voting machines and paper trail machines ahead of every Lok Sabha polls, the sources said.

### IAF rescues 13 Army personnel

**New Delhi:** IAF helicopters Wednesday rescued 13 Army personnel from a mountainous area in North Sikkim after they were injured in a road accident. The IAF deployed the helicopters to rescue the Army personnel after it received information about the accident, officials said. In a tweet, the IAF said the Army personnel were rescued from the area that is on an altitude of 14,000 feet. "On 19 April 23, amidst the harsh terrain & inclement weather of North Sikkim, IAF helicopters successfully rescued 13 Army personnel injured in a road accident from an altitude of 14,000 ft," it said.

### Boy stabbed to death

**New Delhi:** A 16-year-old boy, who was recently released from a juvenile correction home, was stabbed to death by unidentified people on Delhi-Saharanpur highway Wednesday, an official said. A senior police official said that around 10:28 a.m., Shastrri Park police station received a call regarding a body on second Pushta near pillar No. 92-93 on Delhi-Saharanpur Expressway following which a police team rushed to the spot.

### Three kids drown

**New Delhi:** Three children drowned in a pond in which they were allegedly bathing near Yamuna Khadar in northeast Delhi's Shastrri Park on Wednesday, police said. Police personnel, who were in the area in connection with a murder case, saw the children drowning around 12.30 pm and tried to pull them out. The children were then rushed to Jag Prवेश Chandra hospital, where doctors declared them brought dead, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northeast) Joy Tirkey. Later, the bodies were shifted to GTB Hospital for post-mortem examination, the DCP said.



**Himachal Pradesh University should focus on research and innovation to address the ecological challenges in the region due to climate change**  
**DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT OF INDIA**

## SPECIAL SESSION FOR SUNSTROKE DEATHS

Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole Wednesday demanded a two-day special session of the state Legislature to discuss the deaths tied to the Maharashtra Bhushan Award function, blaming the Eknath Shinde government for "mismanagement"



# Alcohol abuse major cause of liver disorders: Experts

**New Delhi, April 19:** Alcohol abuse is the major cause of increase in liver disorders in the country, experts pointed out at the second edition of the India Liver Health Summit organised Wednesday.

The summit was organised by the health think tank, Integrated Health and Wellbeing Council and Institute of Liver and Biliary Science (ILBS Delhi). The experts also highlighted the role of regular health check-ups coupled with awareness on the sig-

nificance of healthy liver on overall health as the need of the hour. While discussing the impact of alcohol abuse on liver, Dr S K Sarin, Professor and Chancellor, ILBS pointed out, "Almost half of the patients who come to us with liver disorders are those who have alcohol addiction." He further added, "Binge drinking should be avoided and the role of family and society is very important in this regard. Also, awareness on the ill-effects of alcohol consumption needs to be instilled right from childhood." The event was organised to commem-



orate World Liver Day, a day observed worldwide to create awareness on the significance of a healthy liver and initiate lifestyle changes to achieve it. The day also witnessed the launch of Play-Safe, a joint

initiative of IHW Council and ILBS, to enhance societal and family support and awareness to protect liver from alcohol abuse especially amongst the youth. The campaign launch featured participation from an array of speakers, including Noble Laureate Kailash Satyarthi who emphasised that children should be used as ambassadors for motivating their family members to abstain from alcohol use. He also added, "Alcoholism leads to sexual abuse of children and many other vices in the society resulting in a vicious circle that needs to

end. Doctors, religious leaders and the media should come together to create awareness on the negative impact of alcohol consumption." The launch was followed by a pledge to motivate youngsters to abstain from alcohol addiction and create awareness on the same. While taking part in the discussion Kamal Narayan, CEO of IHW Council, observed that all relevant stakeholders, including the pharma industry, government and nephrologists, need to come together for integrated liver health management instead of working in silos.

## K'TAKA POLLS

### Bomma files nomination

**Haveri (K'taka), April 19:** Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai Wednesday filed his nomination for the May 10 Assembly polls from his traditional seat of Shiggaon in this district amid fanfare.

He was accompanied by BJP national president J P Nadda and Kannada film star Sudeep, as he filed his papers before the election returning officer. Bommai is seeking re-election from Shiggaon, from where he has been an MLA three times since 2008.

Earlier, he visited temples, and also held a massive road show along with Nadda and Sudeep in Shiggaon. Hundreds of people gathered as Bommai, Nadda and Sudeep travelled through the streets in a specially-designed vehicle, after garlanding the statue of Kittur Rani Chennamma, who in 1824 led an armed resistance against the British East India Company.

They later addressed a public meeting, seeking votes for Bommai and the BJP. Addressing the gathering, Nadda said the nomination which Bommai was filing today was not just for the MLA's post, "but it is a way that will give direction for Karnataka to move ahead".

"Looking at your enthusiasm I'm sure that you have decided to send Bommai here to the Assembly for the next five years. I have not come here just to ask for Bommai from you, but have come to seek vote from you on the lotus symbol so that the 'Ganga' of continuous development keeps flowing in Karnataka," he said.

He all hit out at the Congress accusing it of being corrupt, and warned that it would use Karnataka as its ATM on coming to power, and would also withdraw the ban on the Islamic political organisation Popular Front of India, which would increase communal and violent activities.

# Heatwave conditions intensify

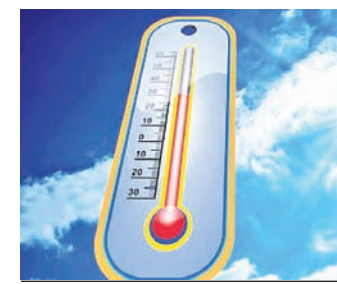
Heatwaves in India are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change, with over 90% of the country in the 'danger zone' of their impacts, according to study

**New Delhi, April 19:** Heatwave conditions intensified Wednesday in most parts of the country, including eastern states with Tripura declaring a 'state specific disaster'.

The national capital, parts of which reeled under heatwave conditions for the past few days, had some relief Wednesday with strong winds and partly cloudy skies witnessed during the day.

Delhi, which had recorded above 40 degree-mark in the past few days, recorded a maximum of 38 degrees Celsius. "The maximum temperature is likely to drop by another two to three degrees over the next two days in the city," a MeT official said.

According to IMD, heatwave conditions are prevailing in isolated pockets over Gangetic West Bengal since the last eight days; coastal Andhra Pradesh since the last six days; Bihar since the last five days; and Punjab and Haryana since the last two days. Tripura, reeling under hot weather conditions since last week, Wednesday decided to identify heatwave, sunstroke and sunburn as 'state specific disasters' and requested the people to take necessary steps to guard them-



selves against the weather. Many places in Uttar Pradesh recorded the maximum temperature in the 40-45 degrees Celsius bracket. Hamirpur recorded a high of 43.2 degrees Celsius followed by Kushinagar 44.1 degrees, Jhansi 43.6 degrees, Agra 43.4 degrees and Kanpur 43 degrees Celsius, the MeT said. The weather is likely to remain dry over eastern Uttar Pradesh while rain is expected at isolated places in the western part of the state, it said.

With dust storm and light rains hitting parts of east Rajasthan, the meteorological department predicted a dip of 2-4 degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature. Dust storm conditions were witnessed in several areas in Bikaner and Jodhpur divisions. Jaisalmer and Bikaner regions were hit by a

strong dust storm Wednesday. Residents in Ajmer, Jaipur and Bharatpur divisions also experienced dust storms, the MeT said. Meanwhile, Suratgarh in Sriganganagar recorded a maximum of 19 mm rainfall in the last 24 hours.

The weather department has predicted thunderstorm with strong winds of 30-40 kmph and light to moderate rain at some places in Jaipur and Bharatpur division on Thursday. The higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh received a fresh spell of snow, while many other parts were lashed by rains, with the weather office warning of heavy rainfall in the state Wednesday. The sky remained overcast in Shimla and surrounding areas with fog reducing the visibility to a few metres in the morning.

## FCRA VIOLATION

### CBI registers FIR against Oxfam India

**New Delhi, April 19:** The CBI registered an FIR against Oxfam India and its office-bearers for alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act and carried out searches at its office here, officials said Wednesday.

The FIR against the Indian arm of the global NGO Oxfam was registered based on a complaint from the Ministry of Home Affairs. The complaint, which is now part of the FIR, has alleged that though Oxfam India's FCRA registration ceased, it planned to circumvent the law by taking other routes to channelise funds.

"Email communication found during IT (income tax) survey by the CBDT shows that Oxfam India has been planning to pressure Indian government for renewal of FCRA through foreign governments and foreign institutions," it alleged. "The Oxfam India has the reach and influence to request multilateral foreign organisations to intervene on its behalf with the Government of India," it alleged.

The complaint alleged that this exposed Oxfam India as "a probable instrument of foreign policy



- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) carried out searches at the office of Oxfam India in Delhi Wednesday
- In a statement earlier this month, Oxfam India said it is fully compliant with Indian laws

of foreign organisations or entities" which have funded it liberally over the years. It alleged that Oxfam India routed funds of its foreign affiliates such as Oxfam Australia and Oxfam Great Britain to certain NGOs and exercised control over the project.

"From the email found during IT survey by the CBDT it appears that Oxfam India is providing funds to the Centre for Policy Research (CPR) through its associates/ employees in the form of commission. The same is also reflected from the TDS data of Oxfam India which shows payment of Rs 12.71 lakh to CPR in the F.Y. 2019-20..." the complaint has alleged.

# Apple CEO meets PM

■ According to government sources, iPhone maker Apple is likely to double the employment base at its contract manufacturers in India to around 2 lakh soon

**New Delhi, April 19:** Apple chief executive Tim Cook Wednesday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the iPhone manufacturer is looking to invest more in the world's second-largest smartphone market.

According to government sources, iPhone maker Apple is likely to double the employment base at its contract manufacturers in India to around 2 lakh soon. "An absolute delight to meet you,

@tim\_cook! Glad to exchange views on diverse topics and highlight the tech-powered transformations taking place in India," Prime Minister tweeted on meeting Apple CEO.

Cook, on his first trip to India in seven years, opened Apple's first official retail store in the country in Mumbai Tuesday and will launch another in Delhi Thursday.

"Thank you Prime Minister @narendramodi for the warm welcome. We share your vision of the positive impact technology can make on India's future — from education and developers to manufacturing and the environment, we're committed to growing and investing across the country," Cook tweeted with a picture of him shaking hands with Modi.

Cook had last visited India in 2016 when the tech giant was just beginning to scale up operations in the country.

Looking to replicate what China did to Apple's business in the last 15 years, the tech giant is eyeing India's massive market with an expanding middle class to power sales growth, and potentially make it a home base for the production of millions of Apple devices.



CHILLING OUT: A leopard rests in an enclosure at Maharajbag Zoo in Nagpur, Maharashtra



# Indian diet, tea & turmeric lowered Covid severity: Study

**New Delhi, April 19:** Indian diet rich in iron, zinc, and fibre, regular consumption of tea, and use of turmeric in meals lowered severity and death due to Covid in the country, according to a study published in the April edition of the Indian Journal of Medical Research by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The study, conducted by an international team of scientists including from India, Brazil, Jordan, Switzerland, and Saudi Arabia, aimed to investigate whether dietary habits were associated with the variations in Covid-19 severity and deaths between Western and Indian population.

"Our results suggest that Indian food components suppress cytokine storm and various other severity-



related pathways of Covid-19 and may have a role in lowering severity and death rates from Covid-19 in India as compared to western populations," said the researchers including from Centre for Genomics and Applied Gene Technology at Institute of Integrative Omics & Applied Biotechnology, in West

Bengal, and Policy Center for Biomedical Research at Translational Health Science & Technology Institute in Haryana.

"However, large multi-centered case-control studies are required to support our current findings," they added. The findings showed that the components of Indian

diets, which maintain high iron and zinc concentrations in blood and rich fibre in foods, played a role in preventing carbon dioxide (CO2) and lipopolysaccharide (LPS)-mediated Covid-19 severity.

LPS is a common inflammatory mediator to induce inflammatory processes in the brain.

Further, regular consumption of tea by Indians helped maintain

high HDL (high-density lipoprotein), also called "good" cholesterol. The catechins in tea also acted as a natural atorvastatin (a statin medication used to prevent cardiovascular diseases) in lowering triglyceride in blood.

Importantly, they said, regular consumption of turmeric in daily food by Indians led to a strong immunity. The curcumin in turmeric may have prevented pathways and mechanisms associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection and Covid-19 severity and lowered the death rate, said the researchers.

On the other hand, increased consumption of red meat, dairy products and processed foods resulted in an increase in the severity and death due to Covid in the western populations. These foods "activate cytokine storm-related

pathways, intussusceptive angiogenesis, hypercapnia and enhance blood glucose levels due to high contents of sphingolipids, palmitic acid and by-products such as CO2 and LPS" they wrote in the study.

Palmitic acid - the most common saturated fatty acid found in the human body - also induces ACE2 expression and increases the infection rate, the team said.

Coffee and alcohol that are highly consumed in western countries also led to an increase in severity and death rates from Covid-19 by deregulating blood iron, zinc and triglyceride levels.

For the study, the team used blood transcriptomes of severe Covid-19 patients from three western countries (showing high fatality) and two datasets from Indian patients.





